

UPSTAIRS CLUB

Volume 5 - June 10, 1964

Chicago, Illinois

An Educational Group

Recently a Ballet minded thief walked up our 28 marble steps and relieved us of one of our best Degas prints...this print was one of the lesser known ones and had hung at the head of our front stairs since we moved into 185 fourteen years ago. Often, strays who wander into the studio looking for the employment agency which is next door - speak of the school as the "picture place"- because our walls are covered with over 200 pictures and photographs. The older they are the more interesting they become. Almost everyone has a snapshot of themselves that they hated at first and 25 years later they became very proud of it.. this is after one loses all sham and pretense in their make-up. Our favorite photo is the rehearsal picture taken in the old Grand studio at a rehearsal for "That Daring Young Man" - in the photo with Madelene and WC are BILL REILLY, JOHN SHARPE, DARRELL NOTARA, JAMES MOORE, PATRICK HEIM, PATRICK CUMMINGS, JOAN & VALERIE EHEMANN and AUDRE DECKMANN. It is not often that one has a picture in which so many have turned out well in the profession. Then too, sometimes the non-dancers success is just as interesting if not more.. we feel they still carry on some of our influences. For instance, VIRGINIA DONALDSON, BETSY ROSS, JANICE RULE, ANITRA EARLE, SUSAN FURLONG, ROSE VRUNO, BONNIE LARSON, ROBERTA REHBERG, LOUIS YETTER, JAMES JAMIESON, SPIRO PASTOS and JOHN CARBO to name a few. Only recently we heard JOHN CARBO and his group in a program "I Come For To Sing" .. JOHN is one of the leaders in the Old Town School of Music group and he is an outstanding banjo performer - and with singing. BETSY ROSS was married in Brentwood, Tennessee, April 24, to BROOKS DAVIS and will make her home on the near north side. There were a series of happy parties for Bets given by her many friends before she left Chicago. KAREN ROSE SEKAFITZ was a recent visitor in the school with her husband and tiny baby...she is as beautiful as ever and very, very thin...RUTH BIELINSKI recently lost a long battle with cancer and a small group of old faithful friends bid her farewell..RUTH was prominent in our days at the Stevens Building studio...

COLLEEN KELLY and KRIS SOPOCKO are off to Europe on spring tours... and there has been a general exodus to New York this spring ... among them PAULA PERRINE who has a part in "MOLLY BROWN" at the Fair ... DONNA MILLER is said to be hard at work there too... CARREN CHESHIER was there on her school tour and was able to take classes at BT..LARRY CROW goes to Jacobs Pillow for the summer...

Starlight has 3 SC dancers this season... SHELLY BERMAN, NANCY STERRICKER and MARI JEAN PENDOLA...Music Theatre has at this point EILEEN BARNETT and BARBARA RUBENSTEIN .. LARRY LONG will again be at Starlight as assistant choreographer and he and DOLORES will teach and perform at the Mid-west Music and Art Camp at Lawrence Kansas...LARRY was recently called home to Los Angeles because of the serious illness of his father ... JAMES MOORE received some excellent reviews for the part of Riff in the City Center production of "West Side Story".. BONNIE MATHIS is in "HELLO DOLLY" ... SHIRLEY NELSON has joined the Mattison Trio and is again dancing with her old friend DEAN DIGGINS...The Ballet Theatre Workshop performance on May 11th was a rousing success for MR. STONE and his ballet "L'INCONNUE"... DEBBY KRYCH and CHUCK SCHICK were taken to N.Y. to dance the parts they danced in Chicago and were a great help in making the ballet a success... RUTH ANN KOESUN & JOHN KRIZA are both proud as punch to have at last a new ballet ...and one originated for them ...the telephone has been very busy between New York and Chicago arrange for the ballet to go into Ballet Theatre repertoire. The big fly in the ointment has been getting the rights to use the music .. French Music Publishers being notorious to deal with... if it is all cleared MR. STONE will be commuting back and forth to NY during the Summer course. .. MR.CAMRYN was the Dance Adjudicator at the rather amazing Spokane Arts Festival early in May.. mighty few cities in America can point to such a Festival with as much success and wisdom ... LINNEA CHANDLER one of the participants was given an SC scholarship for the Summer

course.. later in May MR. C flew to Springfield to pick a scholarship winner given by the local Ballet Group for summer work at SC... This winner was SUZY HAWKS... the next bulletin will carry more about the summer students from all parts of the country....

GILDO DI NUNZIO will again be choreographer at Tenthouse Theatre this summer where he had such a success last year... BEVERLEY LACEK & JUDI SODINI will be in this group ...DEBORAH PODORE is to be married here in Chicago during June ... news arrived that ROBERTA SENN is to begin rehearsals for the new Jerome Robbins show this month - "Fiddler On The Roof"... MARILYN BROWN has again been at the Pump Room with success...followed by an engagement at the Chateau Continental ...ELLEVA JEAN DAVIDSON who was in the school at the same time had some of her choreography shown at the University of Michigan annual concert... both girls danced the "Little Match Girl"... "How To Succeed" goes on and on (WHY?)... However it gives employment... JOHN SPINA is dancing the only real solo in the show and CAROL PETRI has joined the cast ...SHEILA REILLY had her Interlochen winter group perform with Maddy's orchestra sometime back in Philadelphia... JOE KAMINSKI & STEVE PRIMIS will again be on her summer staff... CARREN CHESHER will be new this year...pardon please the odd order of the news in this issue... it has been started and stopped a dozen times which accounts for the order...because it came so late in the season - the May 15 concert will probably not get reviews in any of the magazines...however it was a brilliant success all the way through ...it was DR. ELI DUFFY'S 20th anniversary and it just may be its last on any program... the number had been given up before DEAN BADOLATO came along in the picture, he actually gave it new life and he has had the experience of doing it for three years... each number on the program had its boosters... most unusual on the program was surely "The Lonely Ones" and even those who didn't think they understood it - really did like it... it is the one number people do keep talking about and wish they could see it again... it is to be filmed so that it can be done again ... two comparatively new comers on the concert who had outstanding success

were NAOMI SORKIN and JERRY WISNIEWSKI... CHARLES SCHICK did an outstanding performance of "Hot Afternoons" and MR STONE'S wonderful lighting of the number made it the high spot of the evening... "Valse Cecile" with SHEILA REILLY and JOE KAMINSKI gets better everytime they dance it... and SHEILA's appearance is a shock to all her young admirers in the studio, the fall is to bring a change in the policy of programs...around Christmas SC will again do a program for and with children in the cast... this is also IF we can get the proper support from the parents and those participants that will be used... the number will be limited to those - naturally - with sufficient talent to merit being used... a Mother's Board will be appointed and expected to help in the promotion of the programs.

FROM A DANCER'S SCRAPBOOK

I have myself learned to look at my body as a house in which I must live until I die. I want it to be a fairly clean comfortable house. I do not like making a mess in my house. I have to sleep there. My thoughts dwell there. If I gobble too much food, drink too much and let my body get too gross and too fat, my house is an uncomfortable place in which to live.

Sherwood Anderson.

Beware of making your moral staple consist of negative virtues. It is good to abstain and teach others to abstain from all that is sinful or hurtful. But making a business of it leads to emaciation of character, unless on the more nutritious diet of active sympathetic benevolence.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

To be calm, to be serene! There is the calmness of the lake when there is not a breath of wind; there is the calmness of a stagnant ditch. So it is with us. Sometimes we are clarified and calmed healthily, as we never were before in our lives; not by an opiate, but by some unconscious obedience to the all-just laws, so that we become like a still lake of purest crystal and without an effort our depths are revealed to ourselves. All the world goes by us and is reflected in our depths. Such clarity! Obtained by such pure means! By simple living, by honesty of purpose,

We live and rejoice. I awoke into a music which no one about me heard. Whom shall I thank for it? The luxury of virtue! Are there any intemperate in these things? I feel my Maker blessing me. To the sane man the world is a musical instrument. The very touch affords an exquisite pleasure.

Thoreau

Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I thought a flower would grow.

Abraham Lincoln

Men, like peaches and pears, grow sweet a little while before they being to decay. At thirty we are all trying to cut our names in big letters upon the walls of this tenement of life; twenty years later we have carved it, or shut up our jack-knives. Then we are ready to help others and care less to hinder any, because nobody's elbows are in the way.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

WHEN IS BALLET CLASSIC?

An article by Roberta Coldren Dyer

The question "What is a classic?" haunts every artist in any of the branches of the Cultural Arts. While Sainte-Beuve tries to answer it in regard to literature and what is recorded in literature is often accepted as standard for all of the arts. The generally accepted image of classicism needs specific delineation in the field of ballet.

Ballet, like music, improves for the spectator who has had some experience or training in the dance. Anyone and everyone can study ballet and gain from the time spent.

As an experiment in gymnastics, ballet will improve the posture, give poise and modelling to the posture and add enormously to the social grace of the individual. In addition, ballet is strangely related to some of the usages of Hatha Yoga, in that it will give its adherents the gift of relaxation. This is a classicism in itself.

Having settled in our minds that study of ballet will benefit anyone, whether he intends to make a career of ballet or not, we may proceed to engage ourselves in the more professional view of the public performer and performance. The judge of the performance is always the person sit-

ting in the audience. The critic whose word counts in the final hearing is the ticket-holder who bothers to come watch dancers produce what may be classicism, or what may be a cheering entertainment. In either instance, classicism or entertainment, the techniques and methods producing the show are of the same fabric.

The seasoned lay ballet-viewer looks for two things in ballet; poise in the performer and direction in the show itself. The dancer with poise has an individual technique of dancing developed and is said to have 'style'. Translated into very ordinary language the person with 'style' gives the audience the impression he has control over his own motions, and has knowledge of the art of dancing. We will leave the dance instructors to define and solve the problem of the development of the personal technique, which is style or lack of style in the individual. Our purpose is to define what is classic and the first requirement of the classic in ballet is style in the dancer.

The other half of classicism in dance rests in choreography. A dance must have direction, to the point that the audience gains the illusion something is occurring which is not happening at all. The dancers may not be sad, but a dance which lets the audience be convinced they are tired, sad, and trying to do something about it, succeeds. A dance which makes the audience wish to dance succeeds. The dance which allows the individual members of the group to stand about the stage in various postures, shifting at intervals, is not dance to the audience. If a story is being told, the motion must adhere to the action of the story. If mood is presented, the choreography as well as individual technique of the ballerina must serve the mood and share it with the audience.

No audience continues to attend performances again and again to view persons or dances with nothing to share. Unless the joy of sharing enters into the performance, the humanity of the ballet is lost. If the humanity is lost, the classicism is lost. The ballet becomes exercise, but not art. If the sharing is there, with both audience and performer aware of what is shared, then ballet or performance achieve the classic touch. It is human experience presented, represented and known by people with something in common. It is classicism in the dance.